

### Let's talk...about January 26th

On the day of January 26<sup>th</sup> 1788, Captain Arthur Phillip and the First Fleet first landed on the shores of the lands now referred to as Australia. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples January 26th represents a day of mourning, invasion, and survival.

January 26 is a day that signifies histories of atrocities, dispossession from land, removal from family, massacres, and attempted genocide against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

### Did you know?

That Australia did not become a nation until 1901, and 'Australia Day' officially became a national public holiday in 1994. Aboriginal leaders have been boycotting celebrations since the 1800s.

### Approaching January 26<sup>th</sup> respectfully...

January 26<sup>th</sup> is a day to ask ourselves difficult questions, and reflect on the history of how Australia was colonised to become what it is today.

It is an opportunity to promote truth-telling, understanding, respect, healing and reconciliation.

Reconciliation NSW encourages local government, organisations, community groups and individuals to consider the legacy of trauma that colonisation has imprinted on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and to engage in conversations around changing the date. Whilst we continue to celebrate Australia as a nation on a day that signifies trauma, dispossession and oppression of First Nations People, reconciliation cannot progress.

## LEARN

**Educate yourself** - Read more about the history of Australia during colonial times, and the histories of the land upon which you stand. Learn about the histories of the frontier wars, the Stolen Generations, missionaries, and the continuing resistance and strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures.

Refer to Reconciliation NSW's [Reading List](#).

## ACT

**Show up at events** - Participate in annual Invasion Day rallies to change the date. Or attend events such as Yabun Festival or a Survival Day concert, and gain a different perspective on how Australian peoples, cultures and histories can be celebrated.

To act as an ally is also to challenge racism and the systems that uphold it, this requires critical self-reflection; Are you respecting First Nations self-determination?

## SHARE

**Consult** with local Land Councils, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and community members to gain perspective on views to change the date. This can help you develop a respectful and informed approach. Do you support changing the date, or abolishing the day altogether, for an inclusive Australia?

**Share your new knowledge** and have respectful conversations with family, friends, colleagues and neighbours.